

Monitoring

Required monitoring of Child Nutrition Programs by the school food authority (SFA) includes the On-Site SFA Review of Meal Counting and Claiming Procedures and the Claims Review Process (Meal Count Edit Checks). Monitoring requirements and the associated records for the Afterschool Snack Program and Summer Food Service Program are found in Sections 16 and 17. All monitoring records must be maintained for three years plus the current year.

On-Site SFA Review of Meal Counting and Claiming Procedures

To comply with federal requirements for local program monitoring, school districts are responsible for a minimum of one annual on-site visit to each school by February 1. The meal counting and claiming system must be reviewed in each participating school and any problems corrected within 45 days of the on-site review.

Documentation of required on-site reviews must be maintained on file with all follow-up and corrective actions available for state and federal reviewers and/or auditors. A prototype form is provided for use by the SFA to document this review activity. A full size form for printing may be found in Section 27 of this manual. Locally developed forms and systems for documenting on-site review activities may also be used.

On-Site Review Focus

The major focus for an on-site school district review is the meal counting and claiming procedure(s) used in the school. Observation and evaluation of the system in operation is conducted to determine if all aspects of this critical program area have been properly implemented to yield accurate claims.

Review of Applications

As part of the on-site review, the state agency recommends that free and reduced-price meal applications be reviewed if approved at the school level. Because accurate meal counts are dependent

on accurately approved meal applications, this program area must be monitored. An initial sampling of 100 applications per school site is suggested and, if problems are found, all applications should be reviewed. Errors must be corrected. The on-site review prototype, Form 1 Section 8C, includes working papers for this activity. A full size form for printing may be found in Section 27.

Form 1 Section 8C On-Site Review

On-Site School Food Authority Review of Meal Counting and Claiming Procedures		
School District: _____	Date: _____	
School: _____	Reviewer: _____	
Standards and Assessment (Special Instruction: Explain all "no" answers through comment and completion of the attached checklist.)		
1. The master list/roster of approved applications is current and correctly maintained. The master list accurately reflects names and eligibility of approved free and reduced-price meal applications. (See attached Worksheet 1.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Updating of master list/roster(s) accounts for changes and/or termination of benefits for withdrawals, temporary approvals, and verification.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. The school's procedure for counting meals is the same as approved in the district's current policy statement.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Explain: _____		
4. The school's procedure for counting meals is correctly and consistently interpreted by staff. (See attached Worksheet 2.)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. The approved collection/meal count procedure is correctly implemented for lunch.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Enter the student meal count by category on the day of visit.		
	Lunches	Breakfasts
Paid		
Free		
Reduced		
7. The total number of free and reduced-price meals claimed does not exceed the number of currently approved applications for the previous ten serving days or on the day of the visit. Review appropriate daily participation reports for this comparison. Comment on any noted differences or discrepancies.		

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Claims Review Process/Meal Count Edit Checks

Federal regulations require that, prior to the submission of each monthly reimbursement claim to the state agency for payment, the meal counts be carefully examined for accuracy and reasonableness. The Claims Review Process Form is provided as a prototype form to use to document this activity. This process may be computerized and/or completed on locally designed forms and systems.

The regulation specifically requires a data comparison of meals reported and claimed for reimbursement to the number of attendance-adjusted eligible students. This comparison is required for each school on a daily basis. The objective of this data comparison is to ensure that monthly claims include only the number of free, reduced-price, and paid lunches served on any day to children currently eligible for such lunches. Item number 16 of the Program Agreement refers to this federal

requirement and the obligation for the SFA to complete the claims review process each month.

Instructions for Claims Review Process/Meal Count Edit Checks

Meals claimed on a daily basis must never exceed the number of students eligible by each category—free, reduced-price, and full paid. In addition, attendance at school must be considered; therefore, the edit check calls for the number of eligibles in each category to be adjusted by the SFA attendance.

To obtain an attendance factor, divide the school's current average daily attendance by the latest enrollment to get the percentage of students attending. For edit check purposes, districts are only required to calculate the attendance factor once a year. However, the attendance factor used should be the one that most closely reflects the school's normal attendance.

Form 2 Section 8C School Food Authority Claims Review Process (Meal Count Edit Checks)

School Food Authority Claims Review Process (Meal Count Edit Checks)										
School District: _____ School: _____				Month: _____ Current Enrollment: _____			Number of Days Meals Served: _____ Attendance Factor (AF): _____			
Day of Month	Approved Free (Eligible)	Attendance Factor X Free Eligible	Free Meals Claimed	Approved Reduced (Eligible)	Attendance Factor X Reduced Eligible	Reduced Meals Claimed	Paid Eligible (Enrollment minus (F+R))	Attendance Factor X Paid Eligible	Paid Meals Claimed	Note and explain differences and action taken.
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
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Edit or Claims Review Process represents CRE Regulations Published July 17, 1991. Note: Attendance factor represents the percentage of students enrolled in a school who normally attend each day. The average attendance in SC is approximately 95%. The local attendance factor for each individual school should be used to the extent possible.

Note on the form that this attendance factor is multiplied times the number of eligibles for each category (i.e., attendance factor x free eligibles). Adjusted numbers are then compared to the meals claimed on a daily basis for each of the three categories of eligibility. This must be done for each school for each day of the reporting month. The actual edit or comparison may be completed at the school level or by the district at the end of the month prior to submitting the claim for federal reimbursement.

The School Meal Automated Claim System (SNACS) has built-in edits with error messages that appear when numbers claimed exceed reported eligibles. When these errors occur, claims are not accepted through SNACS until corrections are made.

As a targeting tool for identifying potential problems in a school's meal counting and claiming system, reviewers will assess the district's responsiveness in taking corrective action when edit checks reveal discrepancies in meal counts reported.

The Coordinated Review Effort regulation requiring edit checks and/or the claims review process has been modified, resulting in a waiver of the actual documentation process requirement for districts who have no critical area findings as a result of a CRE Review. However, even under these circumstances, the edit check/claims review process is a recommended tool that can be used to ensure that claims submitted for reimbursement are accurate and will be accepted for payment by SNACS.

Notes: